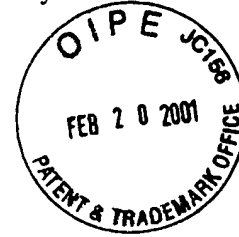amendment. For the reasons stated below Applicants' respectfully maintain that the claims as amended are allowable over the cited references.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 USC 103

The Examiner rejected Claims 1,2, and 8-10 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dworkin (US 4,992,940) in view of "Sales-force automation comes of age" (hereinafter SFA) and Joseph (US 5,878,401). The Examiner has rejected Claims 3-7 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dworkin and SFA as applied to claim 1 and further in view of Lynch et al., (US 5,708,798). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections as amended Claims 1, and 8-10 are now patentable over the prior art of record.

Applicants have amended each of the independent claims to better recite what is regarded as their invention. In this regard, Applicants have added to each of the independent claims limitations expressly reciting that the process of interactively selecting a product and configuring a product to be purchased includes the interact application of configuration rules that are associated with each product option selected for inclusion into a product. When these rules are applied, the list of available product options which may be further selected is expressly modified to limit the user's selections of additional product options. These options are limited by the rules and the available inventory for the product. Therefore, the invention requires the computing system to modify the choice of possible product options that may be interactively selected as a mechanism to allow a user to determine any effect to available products when one or more product options are selected.

In contrast, none of the prior art of record teaches or suggests such an interactive modification of the product options available for selection by a user. The Examiner in the August 2000 Office Action in paragraph 4 a acknowledged that <u>Dworkin</u> does not teach or suggest the interactive selection of options at all. As a result, the Examiner must also acknowledge that <u>Dworkin</u> does not teach the interactive modification of available product options based upon options that have been selected. Neither <u>Joseph</u> nor SFA remedy this defect in the teaching of <u>Dworkin</u>. As such, the independent claims 1,8-10, as amended, are all patentable over the prior art of record for at least this reason.

Claims 3-7, all depend from claim 1 and as such, all contain the above limitations. The Examiner's rejection of these claims using the addition of <u>Lynch</u> must also be withdrawn as <u>Lynch</u> also fails to remedy the above deficiency in <u>Dworkin</u>. These dependent claims are therefore patentable over the prior art of record for the above reasons.

1.   (Thrice amended) A computer system implemented method for facilitating a sale of a

product from an inventory of a selling entity, the computer system including a memory

arrangement and at least one processing unit coupled to the memory arrangement, the method

comprising the steps of:

storing in the memory arrangement product inventory information related to the inventory

of the selling entity;

storing in the memory arrangement configuration information related to selling entity

products offered for sale by the selling entity;

obtaining information regarding a customer's needs related to the selling entity products;

interactively selecting one or more user-selectable product options from a list of user-

selectable options to define a configured product which satisfies the customer's needs using the

stored configuration information to constrain selection of the product options; and

identifying from the inventory of the selling entity, using the stored inventory

information, one or more available which exactly corresponds to the configured product;

when an identified available product that exactly corresponds to the configured product is not

found in the stored inventory information, identifying one or more products:
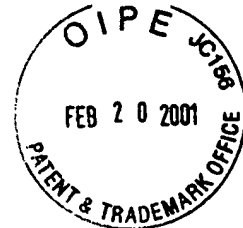
that most closely correspond to the configured product; and

that corresponds to a buildable product;

wherein the interactively selecting one or more user-selectable product options

comprises:

identifying the product option interactively selected;

retreiving the configuration rules associated with the selected product option;

applying the configuration rules to the configurable product; and

altering the list of user-selectable options used to interactively configure a product based upon the configuration rules and the inventory available.

8.   (Thrice Amended) A computer system implemented method for facilitating a sale of a product from an inventory of a selling entity, the computer system including a memory arrangement and at least one processing unit coupled to the memory arrangement, the method comprising the steps of:

storing in the memory arrangement product inventory information related to the inventory of the selling entity;

storing in the memory arrangement configuration information related to selling entity products offered for sale by the selling entity;

obtaining information regarding a customer's needs related to the selling entity products; and

interactively selecting one or more user-selectable product options from a list of user-selectable options to define a sellable product which satisfies the customer's needs using the stored configuration rules and the stored product inventory information to constrain selection of the product options to product options available in the available inventory of the selling entity;

when a product that includes the one or more user-selected product option does not exactly corresponds to a sellable product found in the stored inventory information, identifying one or more products:

that most closely satisfy the customer's intended use of the product; and

that corresponds to a buildable product;

wherein the interactively selecting one or more user-selectable product options comprises:

        identifying the product option interactively selected;

        retreiving the configuration rules associated with the selected product option;

        applying the configuration rules to the configurable product; and

        altering the list of user-selectable options used to interactively configure a product based upon the configuration rules and the inventory available.

9.   (Twice Amended) A computer system implemented method for facilitating a sale of a product from an inventory of a selling entity, the computer system including a memory arrangement and at least one processing unit coupled to the memory arrangement, the method comprising the steps of:

      storing in the memory arrangement product inventory information related to the inventory of the selling entity;

      storing in the memory arrangement configuration information related to selling entity products offered for sale by the selling entity;

      obtaining information regarding a customer's needs related to the selling entity products;

      presenting one or more user-selectable product options from a list of user-selectable options to a user of the computer system for selection by the user to define a configured product which satisfies the customer's needs using the stored configuration information to constrain selection of the product options; and

      providing an indication to the user of the computer system, based on the stored inventory information, of whether selection of a particular presented product option, if incorporated into

the configured product, would preclude obtaining the product from the available inventory of the
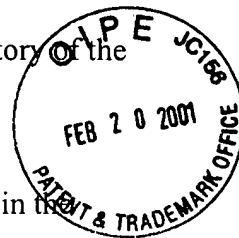
selling entity;

when a product that exactly corresponds to the configured product is not found in the

stored inventory information, identifying one or more products:

that most closely satisfy the customer's intended use of the product; and

that corresponds to a buildable product;

wherein the presenting one or more user-selectable product options comprises:

identifying the product option interactively selected;

retreiving the configuration rules associated with the selected product option;

applying the configuration rules to the configurable product; and

altering the list of user-selectable options used to interactively configure a product

based upon the configuration rules and the inventory available.

10.   (Thrice Amended) A computer system implemented method for facilitating a sale of a

product from an inventory of a selling entity, the computer system including a memory

arrangement and at least one processing unit coupled to the memory arrangement, the method

comprising the steps of:

storing in the memory arrangement product inventory information related to the inventory

of the selling entity;

storing in the memory arrangement configuration information related to selling entity

products offered for sale by the selling entity;

obtaining information regarding a customer's intended uses of a product to be purchased;

assigning a corresponding value to each of the customer's uses depending on an

importance of the use to the customer, and

identifying, using the stored inventory information and the obtained information

regarding the customer's intended uses and corresponding value, one or more products which are

in the available inventory of the selling entity and which exactly satisfy the customer's intended

use of the product;

when a product that exactly corresponds to that exactly satisfies the customer's intended

use of the product is not found in the stored inventory information, identifying one or more

products:

that most closely satisfy the customer's intended use of the product; and

that corresponds to a buildable product;

wherein the obtaining information regarding a customer's intended uses of a product

comprises:

presenting one or more user-selectable product options from a list of user-

selectable options to a user of the computer system for selection by the user to define a

configured product which satisfies the customer's needs using the stored configuration

information to constrain selection of the product options;

identifying the product option interactively selected;

retreiving the configuration rules associated with the selected product option;

applying the configuration rules to the configurable product; and

altering the list of user-selectable options used to interactively configure a product based upon

the configuration rules and the inventory available.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above arguments, it is submitted that the claims are in condition for

allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are kindly requested. Allowance of

all pending claims is respectfully submitted.
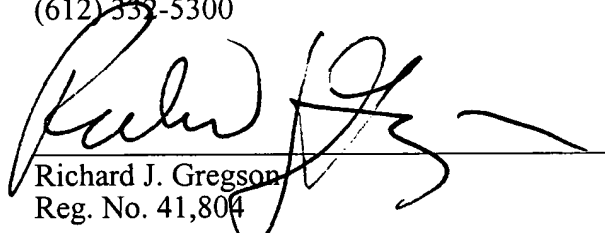
Respectfully Submitted,

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